

Title: Supreme Court's decision restricting services of ninety-two air hostesses of Air India to ground duties.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA (CANARA): I stand here on a very important issue concerning the rights of women in this country. ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN : If everybody speaks for one minute, I will give chance to twenty Members. Please cooperate with the Chair.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : Sir, the Petitions Committee of the Lok Sabha in its report has on two occasions upheld the right of Air hostesses serving on the national Carriers to serve in the Cabin till the age of 58 years like their male counterparts. Shri Rajiv Gandhi, as Prime Minister, in 1989 had issued a clear directive for this. While Indian Airlines has implemented the order, Air India has not implemented it as yet. The matter it seemed was sorted out in the Mumbai High Court recently.

Unfortunately, though it was a consensual judgement in the High Court in Mumbai, both the Union Government and the Management of Air India joined hands with the male dominated union and filed a revision petition in the Supreme Court. Sir, the Government went back on all the assurances and commitments that it made in the Mumbai High Court and because of that, today while the country is celebrating the Golden Jubilee of Civil Aviation in India, 92 Air Hostesses who have reached the age of 50 have been grounded, reducing their salaries and allowances by 75 per cent at the age of 50. Sir, it is a very serious issue....(*Interruptions*) Please do not joke whenever it comes to women.

Sir, the Constitution and the Parliamentary Committee's recommendations have been ignored. While the Government has declared 2003 the Year of Women, the same Government has blatantly discriminated against the Air Hostesses, offering them VRS instead of job security at the age of 50. While the men go on till 58 even if they are over weight and unbecoming in the cabin. Women pilots are allowed to fly till 60 across time zones but they say that hostesses must not stay after 50 because according to the management they lose their looks and ageity at the age of 50. Where should the women MPs then go, if this is the criterion?

I demand an explanation from the Government on their stand before the Supreme Court and a reversal of this order by the Ministry of Civil Aviation, which is a clear violation of women's right to work....(*Interruptions*)

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : Sir, we all support the cause.â€¦ (*Interruptions*)

PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM (BADAGARA): Sir, Members from Kerala want to raise a very important issue....(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA (MAVELIKARA): Just because we are not shouting, you are not allowing us to speak....(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am not allowing those who are shouting. I have given first opportunity to those who have given notices of Adjournment Motion. Now, I am calling the rest of the names one-by-one.

...(*Interruptions*)